

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Today, the nation mourns the devastating news of the senseless violence in Boston and the innocent lives lost. For the Virginia Tech community, today's sadness is additionally poignant as we recognize the 6th anniversary of the tragic shootings on April 16, 2007. The families of the 32 students and faculty members lost at Virginia Tech that day understand all too well the appalling grief that the families of those lost in Boston are now experiencing. We awoke today with too many unfortunate reminders that we must remain ever-vigilant against those who wish harm upon our fellow citizens. My thoughts and prayers remain with those in Boston, and with the entire Hokie community.

During the second week of the district work period, I had the opportunity to meet with so many folks at my district offices in Fredericksburg, Tappahannock, and Yorktown, in addition to visiting various businesses and organizations throughout Virginia's First District. These interactions are always critical, because it's so important for elected officials to understand how the policies coming out of Washington will affect the folks they represent. On April 2, for example, I visited a company in the Fredericksburg area that manufactures various products for the government and private sector entities. These products include providing logistics support for ships, such as meteorological-sensing systems or navigation displays. Our Coast Guard and Navy rely on these forms of impressive innovation, and I enjoyed the opportunity to see their great work first hand.

I was also pleased to meet with Rotary clubs in Middlesex County and Yorktown. The most helpful part for me was being able to hear the members' thoughts and ideas about the policy discussions currently occurring in Washington. As it often does, a great deal of our conversation focused on jobs and the economy, and also on the political gridlock that continues to grip the nation's capital. Washington's continual trend of kicking the can down the road is not acceptable to individuals and families across the United States, and I believe Congress and the White House have an obligation to pursue long-term fixes to the problems facing our nation. Things such as comprehensive tax reform and spending reductions that cut waste, fraud and abuse in government are serious policies that Washington must enact in order to provide certainty to the American people.

At the same time, we must always ensure that our national security remains our highest priority. I was pleased to attend a lunch event on April 4 with the Society of Military Engineers at Langley Air Force Base. These folks understand just how important it is that we resource our all-volunteer force effectively. Our region especially knows the challenging duties performed by our men and women in uniform each and every day, and we owe it to these brave citizens to provide them with the highest caliber of tools and training so that they can accomplish their missions and return home safely. I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with this group to discuss

our nation's defense strategy.

Finally, my role as your representative gives me the great privilege of nominating a limited number of young people to four of the five United States service academies. These institutions may be of interest to students not only seeking a outstanding educational experience but also a way to humbly serve their nation. I am honored to serve on the Naval Academy's Board of Visitors and often have a chance to interact with the midshipmen in Annapolis, and am consistently inspired by the young men and women around the campus attending class and participating in extracurricular activities. If you or a high school student you know is interested in attending one of our nation's fine service academies, I hope you'll consider attending my [Peninsula Area Service Academy Day at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown on May 11](#). If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

The main streets of Virginia's First District are full of ideas to get our economy back on track, and your feedback is so important to me as I serve you. I can be reached by telephone at (202) 225-4261, through my website ( [www.wittman.house.gov](http://www.wittman.house.gov) ), on Facebook ( [www.facebook.com/rep.rob.wittman](http://www.facebook.com/rep.rob.wittman) ), and via Twitter ( [www.twitter.com/robwittman](http://www.twitter.com/robwittman) ).

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee where he is the Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee.*